

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

NEWS RELEASES

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Husch Blackwell Education Team and the Council of the Great City Schools Win Best Brief Award from the Education Law Association

A team of Husch Blackwell attorneys, plus legal, legislative and research staff from the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS) won the 2023 August Steinhilber Award for “Best Brief” from the Education Law Association (ELA). This award marks Husch Blackwell’s third win, having previously earned the honor in 2017 and 2021.

The Husch Blackwell team submitted an amicus brief on behalf of the CGCS, a coalition of 76 of the nation’s largest urban public-school systems, to the Supreme Court of the United States in connection with the cases *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College* and *Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina*, urging the Court to retain the race-conscious admissions procedures allowed under its prior decisions, including *University of California v. Bakke* (1978), *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2013), and *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2016).

The Husch Blackwell team led by John Borkowski included Aleks Rushing, A.J. James, Mackenzie Conway, Graham Johnson, Marissa Hotujac, Naomie Kweyu, and Claire Hawley, among others. The CGCS team was led by Executive Director Ray Hart and Julie Wright Halbert, former legislative counsel, and included Manish Naik, Akisha Osei Sarfo, and Moses Palacios.

The criteria for ELA’s award included Quality of Writing (including such points as logical structure of argument, paragraphs and sentences; conciseness and clarity; emphasizing the key points; use of headings and quotations) and

Quality of Analysis (including such points as presentation of the theory of the case and its limits; presentation of the doctrinal context; focus on points relevant to the Court; use of precedent; inclusion of relevant authority; discussion of relevance to education).

The team was recognized during ELA's annual conference in October.